Home Magazine

To-Morrow's Story:
"JACK CLIMBS A WALL."
By Albert Bigelow Paine.

THE SAVING OF DOLLIE.

By HOWARD DEVINE.

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"DOLLIE!" cried madame, sharply, "Did you hear? Miss Hayes is waiting to have her wedding dress fitted. Didn't I tell you to watch for her and attend to it. Are you asleep?"

"Yes, mam—no, mam; I mean. I will attend to it. I—I did not hear, madame, I—I beg pardon," and the girl sprang to her feet, flushed and trembling, gathered into her arms the priceless gown of the heiress and vanished through the door leading into the dressing-rooms.

There was a snicker from the other girls and an angry snort from madam.

"I don't know what's coming over Miss Culver," she exclaimed. "She seems to be in a trance."

In the mean time the pretty blue-eyed girl with the pink cheeks that were the envy of all the great dressmaking shop of Mme. Gervais had disappeared through the door of the workroom and emerged into a dainty dressing-room, where awaited a haughty damsel with flashing orbs of the deepest brown and the regal figure of a born queen. This was Florence Hayes, easily the belle of all the city and the greatest heiress as well—a superb young woman, with all the hauteur of the born aristocrat added to features and form and carriage of a beauty of nature. She had reigned long and with a high hand, but at last had succumbed to the ardent court of Howard Dunton and the wedding day had been set and preparations were in progress for the ceremony, which was to be by far the most pretentious affair the town had ever seen.

Dunton was young, ardent and of acknowledged ability, already a power at the bar and in politics; not of known family nor fortune, but distinctly one of the coming men of the place and recognized as one of the most desirable catches. It was, in sooth, a model match, and society revelled in it.

Dollie walked over to Miss Hayes.

And then a strange thing occurred. Without the sign of a warning the little dressmaker stepped forward, the lost color blazing in her cheek, and grasping both hands in the filmy laces in the front of the priceless gown tore out two great handfuls.

"Your wedding gown!" she screamed hysterically. "Your wedding gown! You shall not wear it. Do you hear, you shall not wear it. You have no right—in the sight of God, you have no right. The law and the priest may give you the legal right, but in the sight of God he belongs to me and I to him. Of course he cannot marry me—I am not of his world—all I can do is to love him and be loved—some doll born with a gold spoon in her mouth must bear his name," and then the girl laughed a long and ghastly laugh. Then clinching her hands: "Yes, you can bear his name, but you can never have his heart and always you must know that you are second—that I was first—yes, and am first now and will be. He is mine and I am his. All you can do is to ride in his carriages and live in his house and bear his name. Much joy to you," and the girl laughed and cried hysterically as she stamped her pretty feet on the carpet.

The face of the other woman was a drama during this tirade.

"Is this true?" she demanded in a voice so tense as to awe the girl. "I must know the truth. Do not trifle with me. If you tell the truth I will be the best friend you ever had. If you are merely after money you can have all you want if you tell me the truth. But do not attempt to trifle with me. I will not stand it, and I warn you for your own good."

She paused, and the other woman met her eyes without flinching.

"I tell you the truth," she said simply. "I want no money. All I want is him—Howard. It is not his money I want—it is him. I love him—yes, I do—I love him a thousand times better than you or any other woman knows how—and you are going to steal him from me." She sank on her knees and buried her face in a sofa—then rose suddenly and fiercely and went on: "No, you are not. You cannot. I will wait and watch—yes, and pray, and I will keep him. I know I will. You will have all the honor and the name and pride, but I will have him—see if I don't—him and his love. You will have the husks and I the kernel."

"Wait, girl," cried the other fiercely, forgetting her position, her dignity—everything but the words of the woman before her. "Listen to me." And she grasped her arm so fiercely that Dollie winced. "Prove to me what you say and I will do for you what you can never do for yourself. I will be the best friend you ever had."

A few moments later the two women left the place together and rode away in the magnificent equipage of Miss Hayes.

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Never had there been such a gorgeous wedding scene in the social annals of the city. The church was crowded with the fashion, beauty and chivalry of the most exclusive circles. The great audience craned its collective neck to hear the responses.

"Do you, Florence, take this man to be your wedded husband, to cleave unto him, forsaking all others, to love, honor and obey him until death do you part?" read the clergyman solemnly in his most sonorous voice. He paused and comfortably awaited the response.

Then came the crash from the clear sky.

"No, I do not," replied the woman at the altar in a clear, tense tone, throwing aside her veil and disclosing a face of ashen color strangely set. "God help me, I cannot. I"—

"My God, Florence, what does this mean!" exclaimed the bridegroom, aghast.

"Silence," commanded the woman, turning upon him with flashing eye. "I will not because I cannot in the sight of God and man. I will not and cannot because this man belongs to another. But, good friends, you will not be cheated of the wedding you came to see. The bride—the real bride—is here, and the ceremony will go on," and with an imperious gesture she motioned forward Dollie Culver from her bridesmaids, lifted the veil from her frightened face and, turning to the clergyman, said:

"Proceed, sir, the bride and the bridegroom are ready."

The reverend father caught the poetic justice of the occasion and sternly began the service over again. The startled bridegroom, unable to gather together his scattered senses, mumbled along the responses and in a thrice the closing words were spoken and the Four Hundred were making their way to the door amid a rattle of tongues that would have put the tower of Babel to sleep in a cradle.

A DEVOTION TO CONSISTENCY

BY SUSAN KEATING GLASPELL

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JUDGE CHANDLER was the most admired, the most feared and the most disliked man on the Supreme bench. His veneration of the law was the dominant passion of his life, and so above all else and so all-diffusing that in the whole round of human emotions there existed not one that could jostle it.

His record testified that he had never tolerated a testing of the law's elastic properties for the relief of offending humanity.

It was a soft night in April, and the Judge was, as usual, at work in his rooms at the State House.

He was writing the opinion that would affirm the decision of the District Court in the celebrated case of State vs. Margaret Matthews. The members of the court had gone over it at unusual length among themselves that afternoon, for in the first place three of the judges had leaned to a new trial.

Their reasons were a little shaky, but Margaret Matthews was a beautiful woman, and her husband had well enough deserved killing at her hands.

In the end, however, Judge Chandler had disposed of their contentions with the brutality of a logician, and so to-night he was writing the opinion that would mean the beautiful and long-suffering young creature must spend her life in the dreary confines of the State penitentiary.

He had almost finished his work when there came a knock at the door.

"Well—come in."

When the boy stood before him he supposed it was merely a telegram and resumed his work.

But when the young visitor said:

"Are you Judge Chandler?" it was not in messenger boy voice, and upon second look he laid his pen aside and said quietly:

"Yes, I am. What is it?"

"I killed my father a couple of hours ago," said the boy. "I thought I'd come and tell you about it."

Judge Chandler measured him with his eye and was betrayed into a fleeting look of surprise. Then, with his much-feared directness, he asked:

"Aren't you taking your case to the Supreme Court a little early?"

"I guess you don't know who I am," said the boy. "Fred Ewing is my name. My mother used to be Miss Edith Welling when you knew her. She's dead—you know."

There came a gasp of pain from somewhere, but all the State would have denied Judge Chandler having any part in it.

Yet the whole State to the contrary, it is sure that he got up and took the boy by the shoulders, and that his lips grew lifelessly white, and he was mumbling some unintelligible thing between them.

"I did not know where to go," the boy went on, "and so I just walked round. When I saw I was up by the State House I remembered she had told me once if I ever was in any trouble and didn't know where to go to come to you. She said if I told you my mother's name used to be Miss Edith Welling you'd look after me. She didn't have time to say any more about it because he came to just then."

Judge Chandler's face had grown a queer cast—something a great deal more colorless than white.

"Sit down," he mumbled, pointing weakly to one of the high-backed chairs, "and tell me."

The boy threw back his coat.

"Here's the blood," he said, rubbing his hands lingeringly across the red streaks on his chest. "Now you can tell for sure I did it."

The Judge looked from the ugly red streaks up to the calf-skinned volumes that lined the room, and then his eye came back to the table and rested a minute on the opinion he had been writing.

"But why," he whispered in dry, shut-up voice, "for God's sake, boy, why?"

"Because he said things about my mother," said the boy hotly, "and because he took my picture of her and threw it in the fire and stood there laughing at it while it burned up. That's why I killed him. Wouldn't you have killed him too?"

"Yes," replied Judge Chandler, of the Supreme Court, in cold, decisive voice, "I would. God—God," he went on with glowing violence, "how I would love to have killed him," and his head fell to the opinion that was to send the beautiful woman to the penitentiary, and there came sobs that seemed to make those leather-bound custodians of the law tremble in their places.

The boy went over and stood beside him.

"I'm glad you think it was right to kill him," he said.

The Judge shook his head. He seemed trying to say something, but failed.

"I wish I'd known about you before. Maybe if I'd come here you'd have got the doctor for mother when she was sick. Would you?"

"Yes," he whispered, and all the tragedy of a life time seemed to go into the words, "I would."

"She got awful white at last," the boy continued, his voice quivering a little for the first time. "I guess she knew she was going to die. If she hadn't she wouldn't have told me about coming to you. I'm glad now she did. I don't know what I'd have done if she hadn't. He didn't pay any attention to her at all except to say things to make her cry. She cried all the time the week she died. And he didn't care at all about her being dead. Right after the funeral he went away and stayed three days and then he came back and brought some men and women with him. They made an awful noise."

The Judge had closed his eyes and his fists shut tight together. Two bright red spots came into his colorless face.

"Are you sure he is quite dead?" he asked in a quiet, awful voice.

The boy only nodded an assent, for there were footsteps in the hall, and they had halted before the door.

"Beg pardon for troubling you, Judge," said the uniformed officer, "but we are on track of Fred Ewing, a boy suspected of killing his father. He came to somewhere in the vicinity of the State House, and one of the guards said a boy about his size came into the building a while ago on pretense of wanting to see you. We thought"——

"The boy who came to see me had a message," broke in the Judge in his cold way. "He is a boy I know. I have seen no one else."

"That's all," said the officer, turning away. "Thank you."

But the boy was moving restlessly in the next room. He was frightened now, and that made the look of the mother more plain than it had been before.

It was so easy to think the years had rolled backward, and that it was she who stood beside him.

The beating of his heart made him feel what a fool he had been to suppose he could ever live it down—and forget.

The law had been a paltry, empty substitute after all, for the old days were as vivid now as they had been twenty years before. She had never gone out of his heart—she never would.

"Sit down there by the window," he said in a voice he had not used for twenty years. "It will be all right, only I shall have to think it out." At last he took a bunch of keys from his pocket and started to leave the room. "I am going over to the clerk's office," he told the boy, "to look for some things that may help us."

When he came back he laid a large bundle on the table.

"A strange use to make of exhibits," he said, more to himself than his companion, "but it seems the only way."

Half an hour later the boy was an inconspicuous looking girl.

A cloak and hat submitted in one case, and a wig in another, had worked the transformation.

"I think we can manage," said the Judge as he looked him over, "and I can get them back in time."

He turned to make his own preparations, and then when he was ready to leave stood there looking dully about the room. He knew it would never be the same to him again.

A week later came the stupefying news that Judge Chandler, after returning from a visit to Montreal, had handed the Governor his resignation from the bench.

When the truth did come it was a greater blow than the resignation had been. Judge Chandler had left the bench to become a criminal lawyer.

He won his first case, and he kept on winning. Soon it was said to be impossible for the law to hold her own where Chandler—her once unbending exponent—was acting for the defendant.

They frankly said they could not understand.

"He is a strange mixture," said an old lawyer to a friend one day. "I have concluded he is a man whose tendencies are not consistent with themselves."

He was never to know that a devotion to consistency was the very thing that had brought it all about.

A WINDFALL.

By JULIA TRUITT BISHOP.

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MISS ELINORE HOLBROOK, spinster, sat in her room in the tenement-house and thoughtfully took stock, as it were, of the situation. She was forced to confess that it was not very alluring. True, she was young, with a valiant lightheartedness at most times, with a face that had been found very attractive, in its time, and with soft blue eyes that had a gift for seeking out the sorrows other people had shut up in their own hearts, and for carrying help and comfort with their glance. But what did all that amount to this evening? It really seemed that she would have to give up the struggle and acknowledge herself defeated.

She had paused again and leaned back in the battered old one-armed rocker. Something was coming over her that she had never felt before—a kind of weakness that settled down on her like a pall. She could scarcely articulate the faint "Come in!" when there was a rap at the door. A tall young man in a velveteen jacket entered and carefully deposited a large bundle on the table.

"I've had a windfall," he said, cheerfully, "and I've been out buying eatables. I wouldn't give two cents for the things if I have to eat them alone. Come, help me spread the table, now."

It was so transparent that her face flushed a deeper red, but she tried to smile at him brightly.

"What a pity! I ate dinner only a few minutes ago!" she said without moving. "But do sit down here and eat, Mr. Carter, and we'll talk. A windfall! How lovely! You must have sold a picture yourself, then?"

He had been looking at the little table, and now he turned upon her accusingly.

"You have been eating crackers and water," he said, his face reddening. "How did you dare?—and with my room ten steps away! I think you might have given me credit for a little manliness—you might have let me be your friend, at least!"

"I—I didn't mind it," she murmured, weakly, not daring to look at him.

"Don't be guilty of subterfuges, Miss Holbrook," he retorted bitterly. And then all at once he caught both her hands and made her look at him.

"Poverty isn't such a bar, is it?" he asked, with simple tenderness. "Would it matter if we were always poor? It couldn't be much worse than this, could it?—and then we would be together, instead of always alone. I want to stand between you and the world and keep you sheltered and fight your battles for you. You'll let me do that, won't you, Nell?"

"Are you sure you love me?" she asked, wistfully. "Perfectly, perfectly sure?"

"Perfectly sure," he replied with a happy laugh, trying to draw her nearer. But she held him away.

"And would you give up loving me if you found that I was even poorer than you thought—oh, dreadfully poor?"

"I would love you, even if I found that the crackers and water had given out," he said with the deepest gravity.

And all at once she was laughing and there were tears on her lashes.

"And suppose that I were to receive a windfall, too?" she questioned demurely.

"I would try to bear it," he asserted valiantly, taking delight in the bloom on her face and the shining of her eyes. "We could club together and have an evening at the theatre and a supper afterwards and then settle down to the happiest poverty!"

"Oh, my dear!" she murmured tremblingly. "I have a great fortune, but I never was so glad of it, so happy for it before. It had all seemed so useless—and I was so useless—and I came here to live among the poor for a while—to live as they lived—to learn to help them—then I learned to love you."

"I don't mind so much about the money," he answered steadily. "One reason is that the windfall I mentioned is my grandfather's fortune, which came to me through his death five months ago."

"Five months ago!" she cried, looking at him in amazement. "And you have had money all this time? Then why—why have you stayed"——

"Because I couldn't leave you," he said.

And then they held each other's hands and laughed like two children, only that there were tears in the laughter. When they came back to earth, after a while, he cried with reckless happiness:

"Oh, let's eat. I am simply famished!"

COL. CURLEIGH'S RECKONING

By J. EDWARDS

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IT was dim autumn twilight without, with a spiteful gust twirling about the corners of the house and crisp brown leaves shivering to the earth, and the unutterable pathos of late autumn lowering over it all, and pervading every nook and cranny; even creeping into the great oaken hall of the Curleigh mansion and for once quieting black Tom's tongue with a strange kind of awe as he piled higher the log fire and watched the blazes peep about between the wood, and then go dancing up the chimney.

Col. Curleigh, himself, shivered and leaned heavily upon his gold-headed cane, as he passed down the hall and into the library. The room was of stately size, with good taste and luxury modestly and with well-bred unobtrusiveness hidden away in the depths of its soft draperies and carven furniture.

Against the wall stood several massive bookcases, with carved deer and boars chasing each other across the fronts, while ponderous tomes peeped from within through diamond-paned glasses. On the walls, besides the governor over the mantel, numerous other Curleighs looked down from their gilt frames, dingy and cracked with age.

Near one end of the room was a recent portrait, contrasting strangely in costume with its neighbors. It was the colonel's wife, a woman with a soft, beautiful eyes, that had one day looked at the susceptible colonel and entranced him, and then passed off into the dank, stony Curleigh vault down by the parish church.

The colonel drew up before the mantel a capacious armchair, from whose depths he gazed drowsily at the fire. Imperceptibly his thoughts wandered from topic to topic, mostly of the past.

"Ahem!"

The colonel gave a start, for the cough unmistakably came from over the mantel, and, to his further and utter astonishment, the governor in his gilt frame shut both eyes and opened them again, and then proceeded to open his mouth.

"Ahem! Col. Curleigh, I believe," said the governor, stepping without the least trouble from his frame down to the floor, and bowing; "charmed to have the pleasure."

"The same," replied the colonel, recovering his composure with an effort.

"The present head of the Curleighs I presume—charmed, I assure you."

The colonel was still nonplussed, and in default of a remark offered his strange guest a chair.

"Now," said the latter, seating himself and taking a pinch of snuff, "I have a bit of family business to discuss; shall we proceed at once?"

"By all means."

"Well," punctuating his remarks by rapping his cane upon the floor, "you are perhaps aware of a custom which holds that members of my family at some time before death are summoned before a family tribunal and there passed in review. Therefore I have assumed the duty of assembling my relatives on this night, but considered it an act of courtesy to first speak with your honorable self, lest there be preparations such as you may deem necessary for the occasion."

The governor drew a long breath and settled back in his chair.

"I believe there are none."

"Very good."

He tapped on the floor with his cane.

Then, to the colonel's still more profound astonishment, the various portraits, one by one, were seen to descend. First came a pompous matron rustling down from her frame; then several beruffled men, and a slim-waisted beauty, arm in arm with the original immigrant that came from England.

Meanwhile the assemblage chattered gayly over topics of the last generation, gossip long since decayed with its votaries, finance, politics, whig and tory, until one might have thought himself to be his own grandfather.

All was cut short, however, by a vigorous rap of the governor's cane.

"We will now proceed," he said, "merely as a matter of form," nodding reassuringly to the colonel, "to address to our relative a few perfunctory questions. First, your profession was—er?"

"Law."

"Good. Successful?"

"No."

The governor twisted up his watch-chain by way of expressing his dissatisfaction, and a shadow passed over his brow.

"Have you held office?"

"No."

"Amassed a fortune?"

"No."

"Written any books or in any way distinguished yourself?"

"I—I fear not."

The governor twisted his watch-chain into several complicated bowknots, and his brow grew darker.

"The Curleighs," he said, drawing himself up haughtily, "are not accustomed to live thus."

"Wretch!" broke in a ferocious-looking general who had in his time been noted for doing nothing. "I can stand anything but that;" but the governor withered him up with a look and turned to the assemblage.

"Our relative scarcely seems to have honored his family very highly. The Curleighs are not wont to live thus." His brow was like the frown of a thunder-cloud.

"Wretch!" reiterated the general, grinding his teeth.

"Horrid wretch!" exclaimed the slim-waisted beauty.

"Out with him! out with him!" cried all at once. "Shame on him! disown him!"

They pressed threateningly forward, but the governor raised his hands for silence and again spoke:

"I understand, then, that your opinion, after cool and deliberate weighing of facts, is unfavorable to this man. It seems to be unanimous."

There was a murmur of approval, but it was cut short by a woman's soft voice that came from the shadow of one of the far corners.

"I beg Your Honor's pardon," it said; and every one turned surprisedly to the speaker; "the verdict is not unanimous, and Your Honor is a wretch, and you, and you, and you," to the others.

All this was said in a cool and restrained but firm voice, and as the speaker finished she stepped out into the centre of the group.

The assembly instantly recognized her as the colonel's wife.

There was a decision in the beautiful eyes that awed all into an abashed silence, in the midst of which she flung her arms about the colonel's neck and cast a defiant glance at the governor.

"Never mind what these cruel men may say to you. I know that a life cannot have been wasted that made me so happy. Could you or I care for any honor without love? At any rate, I love you as though you were the Czar or a Senator or anything big, just because—because I do."

The head nestled down upon his shoulder. The colonel drew the figure a little closer.

"Now," he whispered, "I think we can dispense with the opinion of these ladies and gentlemen."

The colonel looked up, but to his surprise the company was gone.

The governor smiled benignantly over his head from the midst of the gilded frame, just as he had always done.

But the fire was out and the room was chilly.

"Tom," he called, putting his head out of the door, "some more wood for the fire."

AT THE LAND STATION.

By HARRY KING TOOTLE.

(Copyright, 1902, by Daily Story Pub. Co.)

THE young man, alone in the little house on the high point, took from his pocket a letter, and read it for the fourth time since coming on duty two hours before. Then he carefully scanned a time-table of the White Belt Steamship Company. And that was for the fourth time also. Once more he read the letter, addressed in a feminine hand to Mr. Arthur Hill, and once more he compared it with the time-table.

From the wall above the table a girl smiled down upon the operator. A girl in a sailor hat, with dark, wavy locks.

Hill was awakened from his day-dream by the banging of a shutter. The wind was rising.

Click-click-click, click, click-click-click, click. S-t, s-t, s-t. The little sounder began to jerk like mad. Just the two letters over and over; s-t, s-t, s-t. It was the call for a station. Hill sprang to the table and answered, then with eager impatience waited for a reply. At last the sounder began to speak. "This is the Ethan Allen. Are you Pine Island Point? S. Hunt."

Through Hunt Hill promised himself a long chat with Ethel Wade.

Hill danced around the room in great glee, shook his fist at the raging storm, blew a kiss to the girl in the picture and managed to stand still long enough to reply: "O. K. Go ahead. Hill."

Slowly, laboriously, the instrument began its task. Hill calmed down to catch the first words from Ethel. To his surprise and dismay it was an official despatch.

"Wire Boston office Ethan Allen driven out of course by storm and ice. Lost bearings. Storm increasing. Half speed. Two slight leaks. Capt. Andrews."

Now came another long wait. Since the captain's telegram it cost him a great pang to look up at the girl smiling from the picture. He could only stare at the cruel waste of waters and the gloomy waste of clouds. The unfeeling sounder began to click. At the first words his heart jumped with the pleasant thrill of expectancy.

"Dearest, don't worry. Everything is all right. I am comfortable, and not the least bit frightened. I can talk to you, too. Isn't it strange? But when we are married no long distance communication for me. You can't drive me this far from you. ETHEL."

Hill was puzzled. The captain's message told all too plainly of the danger; yet Ethel's message was light-hearted, almost frivolous. He wondered if she really knew. Trembling like a drunken man, a full minute passed before he could put his hand resolutely upon the transmitter.

"Dear Ethel—You don't know what a fool I feel I am for asking you to return to Boston in such weather. Can you ever forgive me? Do you know you are in danger? Have Hunt tell you everything. I hope it is not as bad as I fear. Of course, you will pull through. After we meet in Boston nothing will ever separate us again. Forgive me for advising this trip. Anxiously, "ARTHUR."

Hill added a postscript for Hunt.

"Hunt, tell me the true state of affairs. I would give everything only to be on the Ethan Allen."

Again came the weary period of waiting. When the sounder took up its burden Hill listened attentively to the story.

"Captain's message tells all. Nothing new. Don't see how boat can live. Miss Wade knows the truth; is calm, preparing message to you. New leak reported. All pumps going. When taking this assignment I prepared for this, yet, for God's sake, do what you can to comfort my wife. I shall do my best for Miss Wade when the time comes."

Fully recognizing the impotency of his position the operator paced his office like a caged tiger. It was all he could do. Taking the heavy iron poker from under the stove he played with it absent mindedly like a walking-stick. The sounder began its feeble record, a rambling and disconnected tale, but all the more terrible for its incoherency.

"Leak in boiler-room—fires out. Boats being launched—can't possibly live—second mate's boat smashed; all lost. The ship can't live quarter hour. Captain will not leave. Ethel and I in captain's"——

It was ended. The little sounder came to a stop with a malicious snap, and refused to give up further secrets of the dead. Hill waited with straining nerves and staring eyes, but it was useless. A loud blast of the wind aroused him. With a piercing laugh he sprang to his feet and grasped the heavy poker. In his blind rage he swung it above his head and brought it down upon the senseless instrument. Again and again the bar rose and fell with relentless fury. Overcome at last by the delirium of his madness Hill sank to the floor, cowering before the riot of the storm.

From above the shattered table the girl with dark, wavy hair smiled down upon the scene of desolation and ruin.

BETTY'S LOVE

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"IT was during my first season," said Betty, disconsolately.

"Pray, then, take comfort," said I. "He's probably forgotten about it by this time."

We had left the golf links for the seductive shelter of the summer-house.

"As I was saying," she went on, "I met him everywhere. He was awfully devoted, and sent me flowers and candy and gloves—he was certainly very much in love—and I"——

"Go on," I murmured encouragingly, as she paused.

"You see," resumed Betty, reflectively, 'I really was too young to know my own mind. I couldn't endure him now. The passion of my life has yet to come."

"'When half gods go the gods arrive,'" I quoted.

"What did you say?" inquired Betty.

I repeated the quotation.

"and you were very much in love, too."

"What does that mean?" she demanded.

"It means," said I, "that when you marry me you'll forget all about Archdeane."

Betty looked thoughtful.

"It probably means," she said with more discernment than I should have credited her, "that when I marry Lord Crackenthorpe I'll forget all about you."

"Should you be so ungrateful?" I acquiesced.

"The reason I told you this," sai delBtty, examining my brassy attentively, "was to ask you if you would mind—that is, if you would care to—I mean, do you think you could find out for me if he considers me"——

"In other words," said I, as she hesitated, "you would like me to sound Archdeane himself."

"Well, yes," said Betty, much relieved by my comprehension, "that's exactly it."

I assured her I would go to the ends of the earth to serve her interests.

"It's awfully good of you, Mr. Carmichael," said Betty, gratefully, "I never shall forget it, I assure you."

"The pleasure," I asserted, "is mine."

"It's nice of you to say that," said Betty naively; "it makes me feel more comfortable. You must appreciate that my confidence is a token of my sincere friendship for you. You can easily see that in the event of my marriage with Lord Crackenthorpe in what a horrible position I should be placed should Capt. Archdeane appear."

"Indeed, yes," said I, greatly affected by the touching proof of Miss Gordon's regard. "I can fully realize it. I once had a similar experience."

"You did?" said Betty, eagerly. "You never told me. Who was she?"

I was silent on this point.

"How did you ever get out of it?" asked Betty.

After discovering that we were not adapted to each other's needs, I decided to tell her so. I went to her and said: "Millly"——

"Was it Mildred Powell?" demanded Betty breathlessly.

I hesitated.

"Well, yes, it was," I said at length, "but I trust to your honor, Miss Betty, not to speak of what I have unwittingly disclosed."

"Oh, very well," quoth Miss Betty angrily; "whatever made you change?"

"You," I said promptly.

Betty was mollified.

Next day, in Paris, Archdeane's sister apprised me of his marriage. I gasped for breath.

"Who—whom did he marry?" I managed to articulate.

"Why, Mildred Powell, of course," said Lady Ashleigh, wondering at my stupidity.

When I had sufficiently pulled myself together I took my leave and returned to my hotel. There I found a letter from my father summoning me at once to Rome.

I accordingly despatched the following telegram to Betty to acquaint her with the result of my labors: "Miss Elizabeth Gordon, Saxminster, Blankshire, England.

"PARIS, 22 June, 1899.

"Archdeane left Paris last night. Shortly after my arrival was married to Milly Powell. Know you will send hearty congrats. Leave for Rome this afternoon.

"R. T. CARMICHAEL."

I have never seen Miss Gordon since. Before returning to England I visited Monte Carlo.

There I met Lady Crackenthorpe on her honeymoon. She received my greeting with a frigid bow.

Gossip about her was rife there and the story was going the rounds that, having been jilted by the man she loved, she had married old Crackenthorpe in a fit of pique.